

The Changing Format for Delivering an Effective Message Using Video and Multimedia in  
Education, Instruction, and Various Forms of Communications:  
A Descriptive Analysis Using Public Relations Theory

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By  
Rachael Burnham  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Given the evolving nature of the forms of mass media in communication, it is imperative to stay up-to-date with the changes that occur in developing platforms of technology, as well as how these advancements are effecting new generations of learners and communicators. Generation Y students have developed a spectrum of learning styles and preferences due to their deep rooted connection to technology that has caused a conflict in learning with traditional, written instruction and communication. No longer do students just want to either read or listen, and video or multimedia platforms can provide them with the resources they may require to fill the current gap in educational or instructional approaches.

This study addresses the importance of acknowledging and adapting to this need to use video and multimedia platforms in education, instruction, and various forms of communication. By utilizing data results from surveys with different focus groups, as well as an interview with a subject matter expert in the field of video communication, this study is able to explore the current use and attitudes of video in communication and learning. This paper presents recommendations for using video and multimedia platforms for effective communication, as well as how to use these progressive platforms to reach audiences of all learning styles in Public Relations practices.

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# **Chapter 1**

## *Introduction*

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study focuses on the changing forms and medias of communication for uses of instruction, lecture, presenting information, and teaching, and specifically, how Generation Y and emerging students no longer learn under standard, traditional circumstances. There is a need to recognize the way in which technology has transformed the learning styles of younger generations and analyze how to adjust to most effectively deliver the message.

### **Background of the Problem**

Standard, traditional forms of teaching and instruction involve reading a text or passage and meeting expectations of processing the information for discussion, direction, or exam. However, teachers and educators have begun to move toward different methods of instruction due to changing characteristics of the students and audiences. Generation Y students have been exposed to a variety of technological advancements and have different behaviors toward learning (Hicks, 2007).

The study is applicable to the Uses and Gratification Theory from the field of Communication Studies, which states that people select and use media to receive gratification from having needs or goals fulfilled (Kaunchin, Jengchung, & William, 2010).

### **Purpose of the Study**

Effective communication is key for a Public Relations practitioner, an educator, a presenter, or anyone with a message for their public. The purpose of this study is not to prove the importance of communication, as that is a priority of concern for a Public



Relations professional, but rather to explore how communication can be improved by the use of technology and resources that learners of Generation Y are accustomed to.

By investigating what forms of communication are most effective for the youth of the technological generation, and analyzing how learning styles can effect the way in which a message is received, communicators can more effectively and efficiently deliver a message. Likewise, if a student or listener is presented with new, multimedia forms of communication (something that can be easily accomplished with the available technology of today), they may be able to better grasp the concept that was not clear in earlier forms of communication and instruction.

### **Setting for the Study**

This study was conducted as part of the data collection for a Senior Project at California Polytechnic State University located in San Luis Obispo, California. The study will use small focus groups of audiences ages 13-17 and 18-23 as case studies. The findings of the study will establish the usefulness in implementing video communication (consequently replacing written communication) for an orientation video at the San Luis Obispo Juvenile Hall with a local non-profit organization, Restorative Partners. Group 1 in the case study, ages 13-17, were given a text document with instructions, followed by a video with the same information. After each media was presented, the participants were asked to complete a survey analyzing the attitudes toward each presentation. Group 2, college-level students ages 18-23, were asked to complete a questionnaire which evaluated their uses, preferences, and gratifications of video communication. The study is specifically designed to answer the research questions and fill the gaps in previous literature on the topic of video and multimedia communication.

## Research Questions

The study used the following research questions to answer fundamental questions surrounding video and written communication, learning styles, and effective communication in Public Relations using the Uses and Gratification Theory. Each question was created after investigating the existing information on the topic in order to acquire additional pertinent and necessary data in communication effectiveness.

1. How does video communication differ from written communication, and how do they compliment each other?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of video communication or instruction?
3. How and why have learning platforms and preferences changed for a new generation of learners?
4. How does video instruction accommodate to different learning strategies?
5. How does video-based communication contribute to Public Relation efforts?
6. What are the uses and gratifications of using video?

## Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to clarify several of the terms on the topic and assist the reader by providing context to the remainder of the study.

Auditory Learner: Auditory learners hear information via lecture, discussion, or debate and prefer discourse; Students who are best able to comprehend material being presented by listening to someone speak will tend to have the auditory learning style (Hicks, 2007, p. 16).

Cognitive Retention: The ability of a student to retain information (Hicks, 2007, p. 9).

Content Gratification: Arousal by the message of the information (Kaunchin, Jenchung, & William, 2010).

Digital Natives: Persons who are also considered to be Generation Y (Hicks, 2007, p. 9).

Generation Y: The generation of people following Generation X, regarded as having attitudes or values, which are in direct contract to those of the preceding generation. Typically used of people born in the 1980s and 1990s (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014).

Kinesthetic Learner: Those with the need to learn by doing (Hicks, 2007, p. 17).

Medium: A channel of mass communication, as newspapers, radio, television, etc. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014).

Multimedia: Using more than one medium of communication, artistic expression, etc. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014).

Multimedia Principle: Under certain circumstances, people can learn more deeply from words and pictures than from words alone (Basu Roy & McMahon, 2012).

Process Gratification: The experience during the use of a medium (Kaunchin, Jenchung, & William, 2010).

Supplement: A thing added to make good a deficiency or as an enhancement; an addition or continuation to remedy or compensate for inadequacies (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014).

Visual Aids: Illustrative matter designed to supplement written or spoken information; specifically in education with reference to pictures, models, films, etc., as an aid to learning (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014).

Visual Learner: Those that are visual learners must take information that is seen and process it into useful information (Hicks, 2007, p.17).

### **Organization of the Study**

Chapter 1 included the background of the problem, purpose of the study, and definition of terms. Chapter 2 will review existing studies in video communication and instruction and how learning platforms have evolved in a new generation of learners. Chapter 3 will present the methodology of the study. In Chapter 4, the findings will be presented and organized based on the original research questions presented in Chapter 1. Lastly, Chapter 5 will include a summary of the study and recommendations for Public Relations professionals, educators, and other communicators of how to effectively communicate a message with a new generation of listeners through the use of video and multimedia communication.

## **Chapter 2**

### *Literature Review*

The review of literature focuses on existing studies in video communication and instruction and how learning platforms have evolved in a new generation of learners.

#### **How Video Communication Differs From and Compliments Written Communication**

Sources and research have stated how video has become different to written communication because of its effect on both visual and auditory learners (Hicks, 2007, p. 17). In the transition to new teaching and learning platforms, many sources have cited the Multimedia Principle: under certain circumstances, people can learn more deeply from words and pictures than from words alone (Basu Roy & McMahon, 2012, p. 427). Human understanding is enhanced when learners are able to mentally integrate visual and verbal representations. Video can cover all platforms, including written communication, with closed captioning and subtitles, further promoting learners reading fluency and motivation to read, and complimenting the traditional written form (Hicks, 2007).

#### **The Advantages and Disadvantages of Video Communication or Instruction**

According to Steven Meisel's article, "Videotypes: considerations for effective use of video in teaching and training", the advantages of video communication or instruction include a video's ability to focus on a subject, bring alive emotion, illustrate techniques, and show things that need visual appreciation (Meisel, 1998). Video has a higher stimulation and learning (Basu Roy & McMahon, 2012, p. 431). Among frequent uses (teachers who report using TV or video for two or more hours per week), two-thirds find that students learn more when TV or video is used, and close to 70% find that student motivation increases (Cruse, 2006, p. 2).

Ph.D. level expert, Susan Weinschenk has uncovered four core reasons we are drawn to video: we are drawn to human faces, voice conveys rich information, emotions are contagious, and movement grabs attention (Rosensteel, 2013). Several sources also report on video's consistency and accuracy when communicating with diverse populations (Carroll & Blacklock-Schuver, 2006, p. 394).

### **Different Learning Strategies and Video Communication**

The literature focuses on video's ability to fit with a variety of learning styles, specifically visual external and auditory external learners. Video provides greater accommodation to diverse learning styles (Cruse, 2006, p. 2). Written textbooks take a linguistic approach to learning, where video can take a variety of approaches, such as aesthetic, logical, narration, as well as linguistic, addressing needs of a broader range of learners (Cruse, 2006, p. 4).

Video communicates the same information to students through simultaneous learning modalities and can provide students with multiple "entry points" (Cruse, p. 6 (Gardner, 2006)). Video is also very effective for teaching students with learning disabilities, economic disadvantages, or students of a second language (Cruse, 2006, p. 10). Video's positive effect on special populations of students is gaining greater attention all the time (Cruse, 2006, p. 10). More than half of teachers surveyed in a survey by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting describe TV and video as "very effective" for teaching students with learning disabilities or economic disadvantages (Cruse, 2006, p. 10).

## **How Learning Platforms and Preferences Have Changed for a New Generation of Learners**

According to a study on cognitive retention of Generation Y students, there is now a conflict in traditional education, as the new generation of students cannot learn under standard lecture style education (Hicks, 2007, p. 20). Television and video remain the dominant medium of choice for 8-18 year olds (Cruse, 2006, p. 1). Generation Y learners have been exposed to a variety of technology, and therefore have related behaviors toward learning (Hicks, 2007, p. 14).

### **Video Communication in Public Relations**

Matter Communications, a full service Public Relations agency, said more and more business leaders are embracing video as part of the Public Relations campaigns, and those multimedia messages are resonating (Matter Communications, 2011, np). These creative video initiatives have resulted in increased consumer engagement and greater brand and product awareness across the board (Matter Communications, 2011). “There is no question that video changes the communication game,” said Christine Moossmann, Director of Marketing at Sigma Corp. of America. “It enables us to connect and engage with an audience we might ordinarily miss, and further speak to the audience we’ve been talking to all along” (Matter Communications, 2011).

YouTube videos are increasingly being used by organizations to educate and inform just as much as they are to entertain (Waters & Jones, 2011, np). For Public Relations efforts, Public Schools nationwide are using video to bring in students, show parents why building a new school is needed, or recruit teachers. Associate director for National School Public Relations Association said, “What we’re seeing now and why it’s more prevalent is

that the technologies have converged in the past few years to make it very easy and affordable for districts to use video in many different way to reach constituencies” (Pascopella, 2005).

### **Video Communication or Instruction and the Uses and Gratification Theory**

The Dictionary of Mass Media states that the Uses and Gratification Theory is the idea that audiences of mass media texts actively use them to fulfill a complex set of needs, such as gaining information for entertainment, to discuss others as a ‘social facilitator’, or to explore the values and ideas of others (Dictionary of Media Studies, 2006). According to Kaunchin, Jengchung, and William in their study involving online gaming and the Uses and Gratification Theory,

“The Uses and Gratification theory from the field of Communication Studies is characterized by the idea that people select and use media to receive gratification from having needs or goals fulfilled (Stafford, 2008). Rather than treating people as a passive audience for media, this theory acknowledges that needs drive individuals’ motivations to use certain media and that media use often fulfills these needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). This theory assumes that people are goal oriented active media users; therefore, they actively take initiatives to evaluate their needs and select media that seem likely to fulfill these needs. The result of such a self-assessment affects their current level of gratification, which serves as the basis for evaluating future needs” (Kaunchin, Jengchung, & William, 2010).

Research of the Uses and Gratification Theory suggests that gratifications may be channeled through at least two processes: being engaged in an aesthetically pleasing medium, known as “process gratification”, and the content of the medium, known as “content gratification”. Process gratification concerns the experience during the use of the medium, where content gratification means the user is aroused by the message or the information. User interactions with a medium may generate both process and content gratifications, and research suggests that both may be important (Kaunchin, Jengchung, & William, 2010).



## **Chapter 3**

### *Methodology*

This chapter presents the methods used to collect data for the study including data sources, collection and presentation of the data, limitations, and delimitations.

#### **Data Sources**

For this study, there were three different sources of data used to cross-examine the original research questions regarding the use of video communication and instruction. The three sources of data collection include the following.

##### **1) Focus Groups, Ages 13-17**

Small focus groups of individuals aged 13-17 from a variety of backgrounds and possessing a variety of learning styles were assessed based on three stages of surveys. The surveys were specifically developed to address attitudes, cognitive retention, and increased or decreased levels of interest when using video communication.

##### **1a) Participants**

The participants in the case study included youth ages 13-17 in custody in the San Luis Obispo County Juvenile Hall from various backgrounds and education levels.

##### **2) Questionnaire, College Students Ages 18-23**

A survey was created to evaluate college students' current use of video and multimedia for instruction/lecture compared to written communication, or in addition to written communication. The five most common uses and gratifications of video and multimedia instruction were developed from this questionnaire.

## **2a) Participants**

Current students enrolled in college courses, from a variety of universities, male and female, were polled with a questionnaire examining their current uses and gratifications in video and multimedia communication, assessing their preference, usage, and learning styles.

## **3) Interview with Expert in the Field**

An interview was conducted with an expert in the field of video production, communications, and technology, Dr. Jack Phelan. The interview was design to connect the two previous collections of data and use a professional's experience and studies to discover possible gaps in the current research on the subject.

## **Design for Data Collection**

### **1) Focus Groups Survey Design**

The youth in the focus groups were asked to read the following short, simplified instruction on how to make a paper airplane:

*No one knows who figured out how to make a folded piece of paper fly, but they have been pegging schoolteachers ever since.*

*To begin, you will need an 8-½ inch x 11-inch paper. A ruler is optional but not required. First, place the paper on a flat surface in front of you as if you were about to write a letter. Next, fold the paper in half length-wise, make a crease, then unfold the paper and smooth it flat again. You can use the edge of a ruler instead of your finger to make your creases really sharp.*

*Now, fold the top two corners down and towards the crease to form two triangles, creating a point at the top of the paper. Press the folds flat. Then, fold the two slanted edges at the top of the paper in so they also run along the middle crease.*

*Warning: never aim your plane at anyone's face, as the sharp point could be dangerous.*

*Fold the entire right side of the paper over the left side of the middle crease so that all of your new folds are on the inside. Fold down the top folder edge on one side so that it runs along your original middle crease. This will create one of your wings. Flip the paper over and repeat, folding the slanted edge over to meet the middle crease, forming your other wing.*

*Hint: a little weight at the front of your plane can help it fly farther. Try attaching a paper clip to the nose.*

*Finally, unfold the wings slightly upward. Now you're ready for take-off!*

*Fun Fact: The longest distance flown by a paper airplane indoors is 193 feet, which is farther than the first airplane flight made by the Wright brothers.*

The youth were then asked to complete the following survey questions:

#### *Survey 1*

1. Rate your knowledge of the subject based on prior knowledge

1      2      3      4      5

2. Rate your knowledge of the subject after reading the text instructions

1      2      3      4      5

3. How clear were the instructions?

1      2      3      4      5

4. Rate your interest level in the subject before to the instructions

1      2      3      4      5

5. Rate your interest level in the subject after the instructions

1      2      3      4      5

Next, the youth were asked to watch a "How cast" video of the same instruction. The link for the video can be found here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0a0p8ygfQM>.

After watching the video, the youth were asked to complete a second survey:

#### *Survey 2*

1. Rate your knowledge of the subject based on prior knowledge

1      2      3      4      5

2. Rate your knowledge of the subject after watching the video instructions

1      2      3      4      5

3. How clear were the instructions?

1      2      3      4      5

4. Rate your interest level in the subject before the video

1      2      3      4      5

5. Rate your interest level in the subject after the video

1      2      3      4      5

Lastly, a summarization survey was given to each of the youth to recap their overall experience with both written and video communication:

### *Survey 3*

1. Which form of instruction did you prefer? (Circle one)

Text      Video

2. Which form of instruction did you feel was more interesting/kept your attention?

Text      Video

3. Did you feel confused on the instructions for either format? If so, which one and why?

---

4. Do you consider yourself a visual learner (pictures, graphics, videos) or auditory (listening) or neither?

Visual      Auditory      Neither

### **2) Questionnaire Design**

The questionnaire was created using an online survey at SurveyMonkey.com.

Participants were volunteers who responded to the survey using requests through social media. The survey consisted of the following questions:

1. Would you rather read text instructions or watch a “how-to” video?

2. Do you feel you pay closer attention when a professor uses video in their lecture?
3. Do you feel more enthusiastic about a topic when a professor uses video in the lecture?
4. List your top five reasons for using video (TV, movies, how-to videos, communication, YouTube, etc.)
5. What kind of learner are you?
6. Do you think video communication or instruction disadvantages students in any way?
7. How often do you seek “how to” videos online for educational purposes?
8. How often do teachers assign you to view an informational video for class?

### **3) Interview Design**

The following questions and probes were asked to Dr. Phelan to serve as data for the study:

1. How does video communication differ from written communication, and how do they compliment each other?
2. What are the advantages of video communication or instruction?
3. How and why have learning platforms and preferences changed for a new generation of learners?
4. How does video instruction accommodate to different learning strategies?
5. How often do you use video for education purposes in your classes? What is the purpose?
6. Do you feel students grasp concepts better/perform better when video is used to provide the instruction/aid the instruction?

7. Do you feel video has any disadvantages for students?
8. Why do you think there may be a difference in preference in video vs. text instructions between pre-college students (ages 12-17) and college students (ages 18-23)?
9. How do you see video progressing in the classroom?

### **Data Collection**

For the purpose of this study, data was collected using survey questionnaire results from both the youth at the San Luis Obispo County Juvenile Hall and current male and female college students from different universities, as well as a personal interview with a subject matter expert and a review of key points in the literature relating to the original research questions.

### **Data Presentation**

Data from the questionnaires from the two survey groups, as well as the responses from the interview questions, were interpreted individually for the purposes of this study.

### **Limitations**

This study presents limitations based on the timeframe during which it was conducted. This study was preformed as part of a 10-week Senior Project. As a result, the study was designed within the parameters of a 10-week period, so the data collected may not be as extensive as that of a study conducted over a longer period of time.

There are limitations to this study based on the type of data collected and interview process. The study was conducted to gain insight into preference in communication platforms, learning styles, what keeps learners motivated and listening, and how to deliver an effective message to individuals of the generation of extensive technology

advancements. However, since only select publics and focus groups were able to participate, there may be assumption that the results apply to all learners of the same age and/or demographic.

### **Delimitations**

The delimitations to this study exist within the number of respondents to the questionnaires and the selection of only one expert on the subject matter. Group 1 consisted of 23 respondents from the San Luis Obispo County Juvenile Hall due to the original purpose of this study to implement video communication within the Juvenile Hall. Results may reflect that of this specified demographic and may not be consistent with the results of different populations. Group 2 consisted of 25 respondents. Delimitations exist in that the survey was conducted using social media platforms and respondents were only those who use social media and responded on volunteer basis.

There was one subject matter expert chosen for this study due to availability, time constraint, and desire to conduct a face-to-face interview, as face-to-face interviews are likely to provide researchers with better insights and answers.

## Chapter 4

### *Data Analysis*

Chapter 4 will summarize both groups of respondents' answers to the questionnaires and provide descriptions of the expert interviewed in the study. Tables and figures will be presented to represent the findings of the surveys with Group 1 and Group 2. Because the interview data was collected through a documented interview that lasted approximately 30 minutes, it will be presented in the form of direct quotations of paraphrased responses from the interviewee. A full transcript of the interview can be found in Appendix A at the end of the study. The answers will be analyzed and compared to the original research questions and the existing literature on how the format for delivering an effective message has changed through video-based, multimedia communication as reviewed in Chapter 2.

#### **Group 1 Survey: Youth from the San Luis Obispo Juvenile Hall**

In order to gain an idea of what the exact population of interest, youth in the San Luis Obispo Juvenile Hall, feels toward video and written communication, each of the current youth at the facility were asked to answer a couple surveys. There were a total of 23 respondents. The following results were found:



Table 1

*Preference of medium*

Medium	Number	Percent
Video	23	100%
Text	0	0%
Totals	23	100%

Table 2

*Attention and interest generated from the medium*

Medium	Number	Percent
Video	23	100%
Text	0	0%
Totals	23	100%

Table 3

*Interest in the subject before and after each medium, scored on average from 1-5*

Medium	Before	Average	Difference
Video	2.956	3.782	.826
Text	2.26	3.173	.913

Table 4

*Confusion generated due to the medium*

Medium	Number	Percent
Video	0	0%
Text	6	26%
Neither	16	70%
Both	1	4%
Totals	23	100%

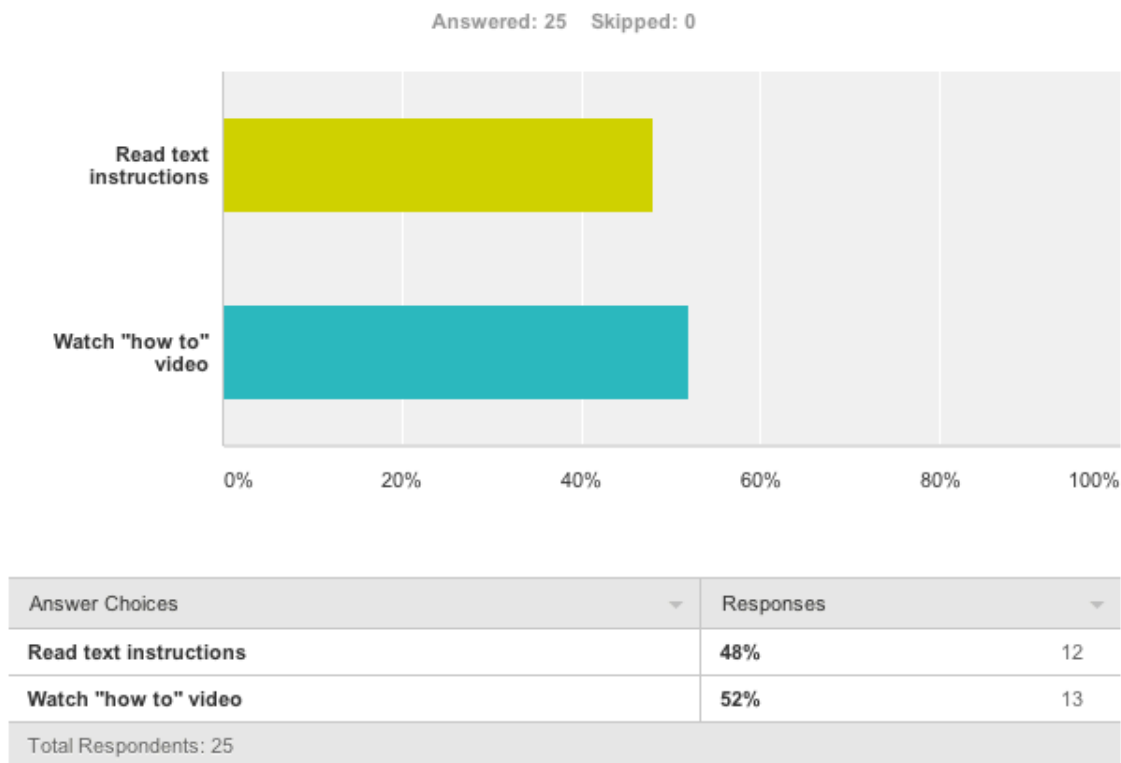
Table 5

*Learning types of respondents*

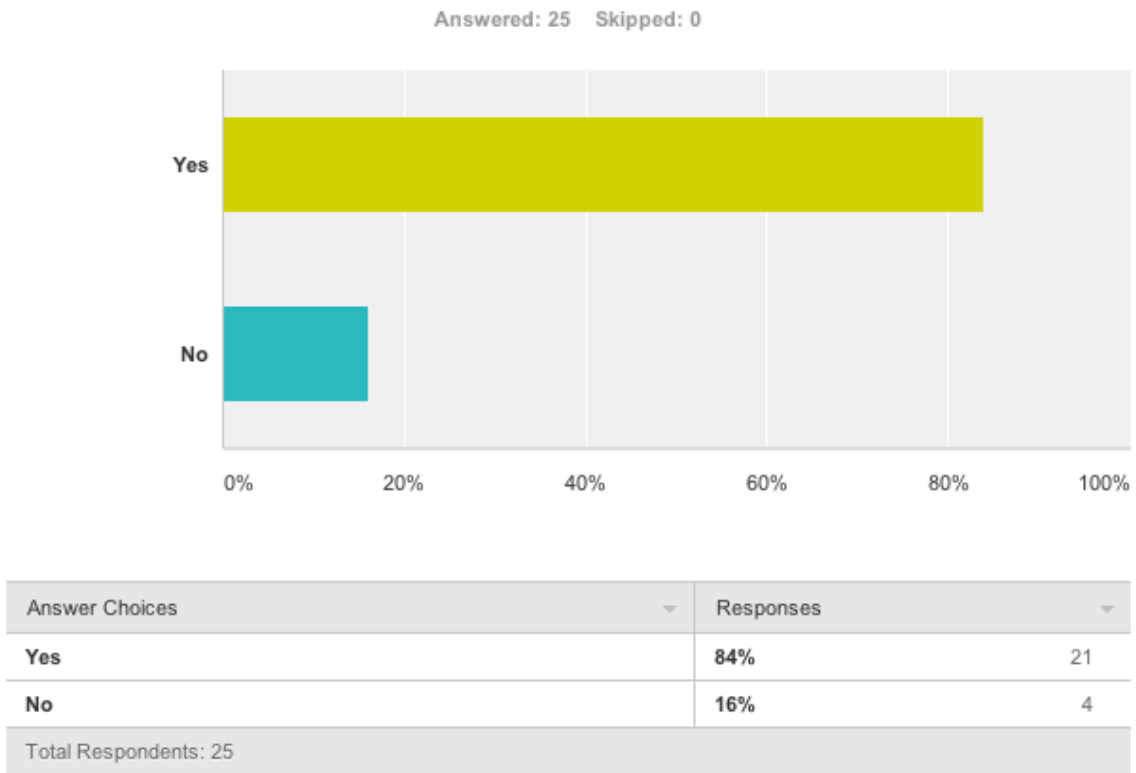
Medium	Number	Percent
Visual	13	57%
Auditory	1	4%
Neither	4	17%
Both	5	22%
Totals	23	100%

## Group 2 Survey: Current Students Enrolled in College Courses

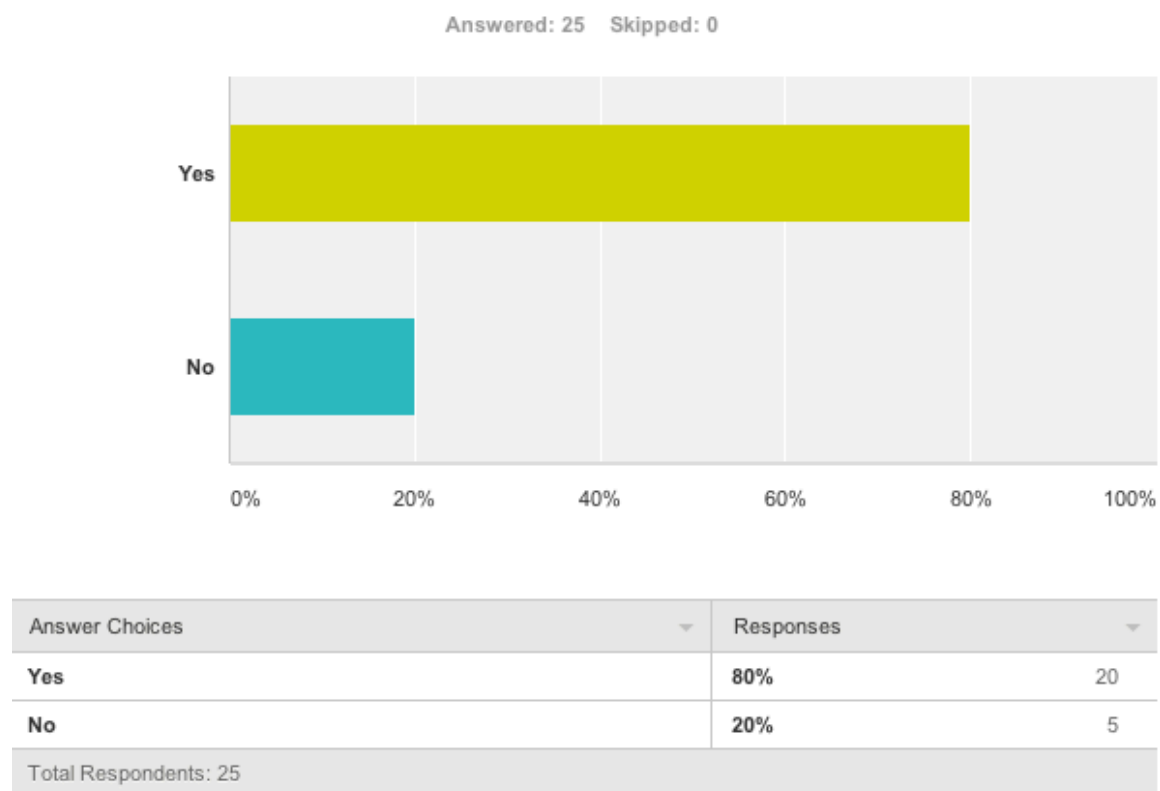
In order to gain an idea of the current usage and effectiveness of video and multimedia communication with college-leveled students, the following survey was posted using social media platforms. There were a total of 25 volunteer respondents.



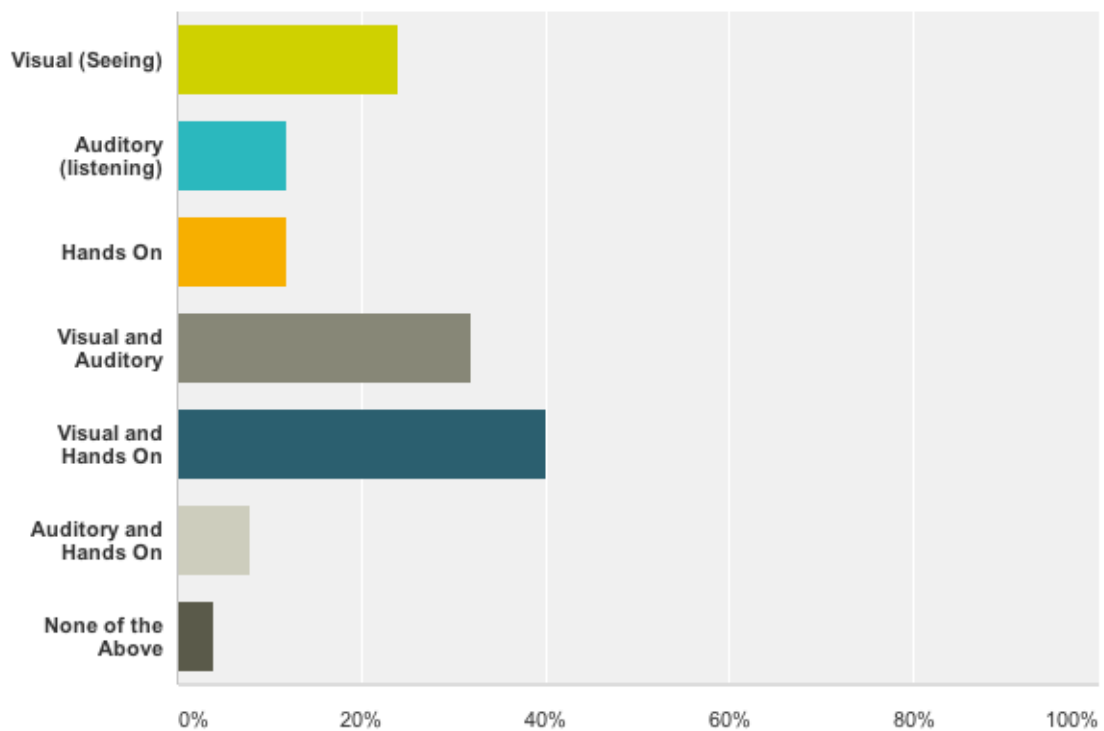
*Figure 1.* Preferences of medium for instruction or communication



*Figure 2.* Attention generated due to medium



*Figure 3.* Enthusiasm generated due to medium



Answer Choices	Responses	
Visual (Seeing)	24%	6
Auditory (listening)	12%	3
Hands On	12%	3
Visual and Auditory	32%	8
Visual and Hands On	40%	10
Auditory and Hands On	8%	2
None of the Above	4%	1
Total Respondents: 25		

*Figure 4.* Learning types of respondents

Table 6

*Disadvantages of video as listed by the respondents*

Answer	Frequency of Response
No	4
Not if used as a supplement	1
Only students who are hands on learners	1
Yes, because people might not be able to hear or might lose focus	1
It allows students to stop paying attention	1
Some are too long and I lose interest	1
Only when professors use them to teach instead of as an aid	1
Might be distracting	1
Could cause more mindlessness	1
I don't always watch the entire video	1

Table 7

*Uses for video listed by respondents as one of their 'top five' reasons for use*

Answer	Frequency of Response
TV	10
YouTube	9
Movies	9
Education	4
How-to Videos	3
Entertainment	2
Music	2
Communication	2
News	1
Snap chat	1

### **Description of Participating Expert in Related Field**

The subject matter expert chosen for the interview portion of this study, Dr. Jack Phelan, was selected based on his background in video production and his experience in applying that to video education in the classroom as a Cal Poly professor. Dr. Phelan has a Master's Degree in Teaching and Learning with Technology and a Ph.D. in Professional Studies. Before his time teaching Media and Technology courses at Cal Poly, he served as a full-time faculty member at Providence College as an instructor of film and media studies, and has been a professional writer, producer, and director in the film, television, and multi-



media industry since 1988. In his personal biography for class, Dr. Phelan states, “I believe students learn best when they are fully engaged, so I use a combination of teaching methods to make lecture and lab as stimulating and interactive as possible.” Dr. Phelan shows great passion for this expertise in the subject of video and multimedia communication, and is an active advocate for the expansion of the use of technology communication in education. “I recognize the impact I can have on their lives and future careers. I embrace the responsibility I carry to excite them, not only about media and technology, but of the possibilities in the world around them.”

### **Interview Questions Response**

#### **1. How does video communication differ from written communication, and how do they compliment each other?**

Question #1 was asked to begin with a general insight into the difference between the two media platforms being explored in the purpose of the study. The question was designed to also acknowledge the possible complimentary effect the two media platforms may have on each other.

- “Video by its very nature is a multimedia platform – moving tables, moving texts, audio, music, etc. The lone aspect that video incorporates musical intelligence is very powerful. Music can set the tone, speak to emotions, or anchor certain things in your memory.”
- “In terms of complimenting each other, it’s very interesting. Because of the new law that closed captioning is required, there’s a strange thing that happens. You’re watching the video, but also getting the text with it, fitting

into the new generation of the multitaskers, and completely super-charging your brain.”

## **2. What are the advantages of video communication/instruction?**

Question #2 was asked to gain perspective on how an expert in the field, and an active user of video communication and instruction views the advantages of video. By highlighting the advantages of video, we can then move forward with these specific aspects in the implementation.

- “Using video is eternal – it can be watched over and over so that you don’t miss the concept. Of course you want the experience of the classroom, but education is just exploding online. It’s important to get the lesson over and over until you understand it, and it’s not often that a professor goes over the information that many times.”
- “If you have short, compelling videos of the lesson, it’s the replay factor that’s really powerful.”
- “We’ve proven that you speak 150 words per minute, and we read 250 words per minute... on average. So if an instructor is putting text up on the screen, students are likely to be reading it faster than an instructor can say it. They then get ahead and bored.”

## **3. How and why have learning platforms and preferences changed for a new generation of learners?**

Question #3 was asked to gain insight into the source of preference or interest in specific media platforms due to the different learning styles. This question serves to

acknowledge the reason for different learning styles, as well as how they have an effect on students in the classroom.

- “What we’re finding is that everyone learns differently... EVERYONE. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) tries to encompass everyone’s design for learning.”
- “UDL and multiple intelligences says we learn nine different ways.”
- “We have now quickly elevated out of the industrial age, which was very much verbal and mathematical, to the information age, and now, to the communication age. Media saturates our lives.”
- “Students are raised in the environment that we try and fit them into.”
- “New learners are raised in front of the television, especially lower economical learners. The elevation of graphic material is pervasive in all of our culture, and that becomes your learning toolset- it engages you more and you are easier able to connect to other things.”
- “It’s proven that the younger generations’ brains are making more connections at once, where generations prior could not handle it. If students can handle this in TV or entertainment, we need to do that in teaching as well, so it stays stimulating for them and they can super-charge their brains and stay focused.”

#### **4. How does video instruction accommodate to different learning strategies?**

Question #4 was asked to acknowledge the importance of recognizing different learning styles and investigate how video instruction approaches them.

- “It’s Universal Design, everyone operates in the world we live in differently, and video is one way to reach those that cannot connect to the message through other forms.”
- “It’s the same as a wheelchair against the stairs; you build a ramp so they can get in. With learning, we need to build ramps for people to get in who can’t just listen and take notes. We need supplements, one of which can be video.”
- “Many students fall off the radar because they are spatial, visual learners.”
- “For disabled learners, technology, or the “screen”, gives them a multisensory use for learning. The blind can’t see the words, but a video or technological platform can speak as a reader would, and they can access the information. The deaf can’t hear the words, but they can read it on the screen and see visuals or moving graphics.”
- “It provides another form of representation, making sure all mediums are available to the people that need them and providing alternative methods for all learners.”

**5. How often do you use video for education purposes in your own classes? What is the purpose?**

Question #5 was asked to gain perspective on how much interest a professional in the field has in utilizing the benefits of video for educational purposes in his own classroom, as well as investigate the exact purposes and methods it is implemented.

- “What I’m doing more and more of is supplemental, called “scaffolding”. I teach something and then provide something extra. If you didn’t get it all in class, or if a PowerPoint is not enough, then I do a walk-through

demonstration video. I film my cursor on the screen as a visual video lesson of what we did in class for the students to use at home.”

- “In some of my classes, students are now embedding video into their PDF’s that they turn into me electronically. It’s no longer black text on white paper where you most likely don’t want to continue reading. Instead, readers are pulled in by moving pictures and *interesting, powerful* information.

**6. Do you feel students grasp concepts better/perform better when video is used to provide the instruction/aid the instruction?**

Question #6 was asked to gain insight into the response and feedback a professional in the field has received from his students on the use of video in his classroom. The question specifically focuses on student performance based on their understanding and relation to the medium. It also provides room for discussion of “video aid” to traditional instruction.

- “I guess it depends on the instructor, but I definitely notice a switch in my students when something is in front of them on a screen. I see it as the “CNN Headline News” effect – they are forced to multitask, keeping them more stimulated. Suddenly, they are required to multitask by watching a person, listening, and digesting what is written on the screen.”
- “The students really like the walk-through videos, many because they need to revisit ideas.”
- “I would think it’s just because of the medium that they’ve grown up in that they like it so much.”

## 7. Do you feel video has any disadvantages for students?

Question #7 was asked to discover any disadvantages from the opinion of a professional in practice with video that may line up to or dispute the disadvantages listed in previous research on the topic.

- “There is the idea that video is a passive medium, it’s coming *to* you and you are *receiving* the information. Reading, however, or engaging with an instructor, is more interactive or ‘organic’. It requires feedback. Video can be a one-way channel... but much research will say that that’s okay, you’re still taking in the content.”
- “The next important step, when we can really decide if we’re actually learning, is if you can then teach or explain the information to someone else, then application. If a student is still required to apply the information, we can really evaluate the effectiveness of the message... or the medium.”
- “It’s not just playing a video; it’s usually a snippet or illustration or something small that’s supportive of my lecture. We are not a third grade class that just sits there and watches a movie for an hour and a half. I’ll use anything up to five minutes long at the very most. Duration and purpose are both very important.”

**8. Why do you think there may be a difference in preference in video vs. text instructions between pre-college students (ages 13-17) and college student (ages 18-23)?**

Question #8 was asked to gain perspective from a professional in the field on the topic of preference, but specifically pertaining the results found in the two surveys conducted for this study.

- “Verbal, linguistic, mathematical. That is how you are tested to get into Cal Poly. Those are the primary focuses of the SAT scores and college entrance tests. Cal Poly has weeded out anyone that doesn’t fit that model... and we might actually be seeing it as a problem. They’re great at reading and memorization, but the critical thinking skills (creativity), is not a focus.”
- Cal Poly (and many other universities) is not a representation of the country. These students are the strongest verbal, linguistic, and mathematical people around. So at their level, they’re likely to choose the written platforms, the reading and memorizing or taking notes, where students not at Cal Poly, or below the university level, would be likely to choose the video platform for instruction.”

**9. How do you see video progressing in the classroom?**

Question #9 was asked to gain insight into how a professional sees the movement of video communication continuing forward, as well as highlight specific forms of progression that future researches can carry on for this study.

- “Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) will continue to gain popularity, being visually and spatially driven; makes the illustrations move, illustrates the message, and illustrates the evidence, which all enhance learning.”
- “The movement towards the flipped classroom is what will happen, and this is where video is going to become a major lesson. Teachers will likely videotape lessons from *master* professors, flipping the “homework”. The classroom component is the actual homework, and then the homework component that you would previously do at home by yourself, you do in the classroom with your classmates and professor.”
- “I’m sold on flipping classrooms. The video becomes the classroom, then allowing students to come to the classroom to talk about what they’ve learned from the video.”

### **Critical Analysis of Media Preference**

The following table identifies the contrast between preference of media platforms for communication or instruction between Group 1 and Group 2. The analysis is a pilot study and further research should be performed to conclude preference tendencies between the two demographics.



Table 8

*T-Test contrasting preference of media platform between Group 1 and Group 2.*

Group	Video	Text
Group 1	13	12
Group 2	100	0

From the table presented in Table 8, 100% of the participants in Group 1, ages 13-17, preferred watching a video rather than reading text instructions to receive the same information. In contrast, 52% of the participants in Group 2, ages 18-23, preferred watching a video rather than reading text instructions to receive the same information.

Subject matter expert, Dr. Jack Phelan, responded to the contrast in preference of media choice saying Cal Poly students (and students of other universities) are tested for entrance based on their verbal, linguistic, and mathematical skills. "Cal Poly has weeded out anyone that doesn't fit that model... and we might actually be seeing it as a problem. They're great at reading and memorization, but the critical thinking skills (creativity), is not a focus." Dr. Phelan also argues that Cal Poly may not be a fair representation of the country. "At their level, they're likely to choose the written platforms, the reading and memorizing or taking notes, where students not at Cal Poly, or below the university level, would be likely to choose the video platform for instruction" (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

## **Video Communication Data**

For this study, it was important to collect current data on the topic and usage of video communication in both education and instruction due the continuous evolve of the medium's nature. To acquire this data, focus groups of multiple age groups and skill levels were surveyed and an interview was conducted with an expert from the field, Dr. Jack Phelan. Each of the surveys analyzed the student respondents' attitudes towards video communication over other mediums, preference, attentiveness, and learning styles. Dr. Phelan was asked questions designed to draw connections in the data reported from Group 1 and Group 2, and provide insight into the background and current state of video communication. The following presents the data in junction with the original research question in which it addresses.

### **Research question 1: How does video communication differ from written communication, and how do they compliment each other?**

This research question was studied due to the evolving use of video for instructional purposes and in the classroom, and how the fundamental nature and benefits of video differ from that of written communication. The question also addresses the possibility and effect of written communication and video communication being used together in collaboration.

The literature depicting the fundamental differences between video communication and written communication describes a video's ability to focus on a subject, bring alive emotions, illustrate a technique, and show things that need visual appreciation (Meisel, 1998, np). An interview with Dr. Jack Phelan supports the ability of video that the literature

suggests, but also includes video's ability to possess the power of music. Dr. Phelan said, "Video by its very nature is a multimedia platform; moving tables, moving texts, audio, music, etc. The lone aspect that video incorporates musical intelligence is very powerful. Music can set the tone, speak to emotions, or anchor certain things in your memory" (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

The literature suggesting a significant difference between video communication and written communication predominately centers on video's ability to have an effect on both visual and auditory learners (Hicks, 2007, p. 17). In the data collected with Group 1, 52% reported that they are visual learners and 22% reported they were both visual and auditory learners. Therefore, 74% of respondents from Group 1 reported they were some sort of visual learner. In the data collected from Group 2, the top three categories of learning styles were Visual, Visual and Auditory, and Visual and Hands On, making up for 96% of respondents, meaning 96% of respondents are some sort of visual learners.

Much of the current literature supports the use of both written communication and video communication in collaboration. Video can cover all platforms, including written communication, with closed captioning and subtitles, further promoting learners reading fluency and motivation to read, and complimenting the traditional written form (Hicks, 2007). According to the Multimedia principle, under certain circumstances, people can learn more deeply from words and picture than from words alone, and human understanding is enhanced when learners are able to mentally integrate visual and verbal representations (Basu Roy & McMahon, 2012, p. 427).

Dr. Phelan uses the concept of video and textual collaboration by providing supplements for his students, called scaffolding. "You teach something and then provide

something extra. If you didn't get it all in class or if a PowerPoint is not enough, then I do a walk-through demonstration filming my cursor as a visual video lesson of what we did in class," (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

In the interview conducted with Dr. Phelan, he stated, "With video, students are suddenly required to multitask by watching a person, listening, and digesting what's on the screen," which fits into, what he calls, a generation of multitaskers (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

A study at the University of Kansas assessed the impact of written and video help tutorials on seven online quizzes in an undergraduate math course. The study states that the proportion of students whose scores improved after using both written and video help tutorials was greater than those who used the written help tutorials alone (Gawlik, 2009).

Another study, involving students at a lower course and age level, collected data on 76 fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. The students were divided into two groups, a video and non-video group, to learn 30 vocabulary words over a six-week period. The study found that the students in the video group outperformed the students in the non-video group in oral recall and application of target words. When surveyed after the study, both students and teachers were more favorable to the video instruction, and 85% in the video group said they enjoyed the learning style, where only 40% in the non-video group said they enjoyed the style (Xin, 1993, p. 77).

Dr. Phelan said many of his students enjoy supplemental videos he provides because it allows them to revisit ideas. "If you have short, compelling videos of the lesson, it's the replay factor that's really powerful" (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

## **Research question 2: What are the advantages and disadvantages of video communication or instruction?**

This question was asked to gain insight into the advantages of using video communication over written communication, and therefore how video communication can provide greater benefit to the receiver.

The existing literature finds that video communication is advantageous due to the following: higher stimulation and learning, more attention grabbing, better use of time, and more consistent, especially for diverse populations (Carroll & Blacklock-Schuver, 2006, p. 394).

In data collected from Group 2, 84% of respondents stated they pay closer attention when a professor uses video in their lecture, and 80% said they feel more enthusiastic about a topic when a professor uses video in the lecture.

An article published on Forbes magazine online contributed by Sean Rosensteel references Ph. D. level expert, Susan Weinschenk's, idea that as humans, we are drawn to video for four reasons (Rosensteel, 2013):

1. We pay attention to human faces
2. Voice conveys information and turns information into meaningful content
3. Emotions are contagious
4. Movement grabs attention

Dr. Phelan adds that video is eternal; it can be watched over and over so that you don't miss the concept. Also exploring the speed of video, he said, "We've proven that you speak 150 words per minute, and we read 250 words per minute (on average). So if an instructor is putting text on the screen, students are likely to be reading it faster than an

instructor can say it. They then get ahead and bored” (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

Some literature poses the concern that video communication can increase the potential for excessive cognitive load and distraction, create technical difficulties, encourage a reduction of deep thinking, and introduce a forced pace (Basu Roy & McMahon, 2012).

In the data found in the survey with Group 2, approximately 30% of respondents said they do not think video communication disadvantages students in anyway. Another respondent said video is only a disadvantage to students when professors use them to teach, instead of as an aid to their teaching.

In the interview with Dr. Phelan, he acknowledged that there is the common idea of video as a passive medium, that video is coming *to* you and you are *receiving* the information. He said that video can be a one-way channel, as opposed to organic interaction with a professor. However, he followed up by stating that that’s okay, because students today are still taking in the content through the medium of video (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

### **Research question 3: How and why have learning platforms and preferences changed for a new generation of learners?**

This question was asked to gain insight into the core reasons for a recent and ongoing change in communication platforms and preferences. Current literature explains that today’s students are no longer the people our education system was designed to teach (Hicks, 2007, p. 20).

The existing literature addressing why a new generation of learning styles and preferences have changed, explains that each generation has its own unique learning traits (Hicks, 2007, p. 2), and states that kids learn to prefer multimedia presentations and visuals over books and verbal discussion because of their exposure to TV and viewing screens (Knapp, 2000). Dr. Phelan stated, “Students are raised in the environment that we try and fit them into. New learners are raised in front of the television, especially lower economical learners. The elevation of graphic material is pervasive in all of our culture, and that becomes your learning toolset – it engages you more and more and you are easier able to connect to other things” (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

Current literature explains the reason for a new generation of learners taking on different learning platforms and preferences as their connection to technology. Generation Y students have been exposed to a variety of technological advancements and have different behaviors towards learning, and these differences may be causing a conflict in traditional education, creating an inability for Generation Y students to learn under the standard education method of lecture (Hicks, 2007). Dr. Phelan said, “Younger generations’ brains are making more and more connections at once, where generation prior could not handle it. If students can handle this in TV or entertainment, we need to do that in teaching as well so that it stays stimulating for them and they can super-charge their brains and stay focused” (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

In studies with both Group 1 and Group 2, the majority stated they prefer watching a How-to video rather than reading text instructions to receive the same information. In Group 1 (ages 13-17), 100% of the respondents preferred video, and in Group 2 (ages 18-23), 52% of the respondents preferred video.

#### **Research question 4: How does video instruction accommodate to different learning strategies?**

This question was asked to acknowledge the multitude of learning strategies and behaviors toward learning that students have developed due to evolving technology and practices, and explore how video instruction or communication can accommodate to this broad range of learning strategies.

Recent literature spotlights a current need to consider different learning strategies in teaching and instruction. Dr. Phelan states, “Everyone operates in the world we live in differently, and video is one way to reach those that cannot connect to the message in other forms.” He connects the use of video communication and instruction to that of a wheelchair ramp. “The concept is the same as a wheelchair against the stairs; you build a ramp so they can still get in. With learning, we need to build ramps for people to get in who can’t just listen and take notes. We need supplements, one of which can be video,” Phelan said (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

Students that struggle with reading technical writing may benefit from an audio and visual approach (Gawlik, 2009). When instructional devices that combine learning styles are utilized, a greater number of students may be reached and effectively taught (Hicks, 2007, p. 19). Dr. Phelan said, “Video provides another form of representation, making sure all mediums are available to the people that need them and providing alternative methods for all learners” (personal communication, March 4, 2014).



## **Research question 5: How does video-based communication contribute to Public Relation efforts?**

This question was asked to identify how the findings of this study in the effectiveness of video in communication and instruction can be used in the efforts of Public Relations practitioners in the industry.

Current literature identifies a need for finding the most effective way for teaching Generation Y, and points to the responsibility of the teacher or communicator to identify the learning strategies of students or publics and address them in the most effect means of instruction (Hicks, 2007, p. 1).

Public Schools nationwide are using video to bring in students, show parents why building a new school is needed, or to recruit teachers. The Associate Director for National School Public Relations Association said, “What we’re seeing now and why it’s more prevalent is that the technologies have converged in the past few years to make it very easy and affordable for districts to use video in many different ways to reach constituencies” (Pascopella, 2005, np).

Matter Communications, a full service Public Relations agency, said more and more business leaders are embracing video as part of their Public Relations campaigns, and the multimedia messages are resonating, resulting in increased consumer engagement and greater brand and product awareness across the board. The Director of Marketing at Sigma Corporation of America, Christine Moosman, said, “There is no question that video changes the communication game. It enables us to connect and engage with an audience we might ordinarily miss, and further speak to the audience we’ve been talking to all along” (Matter Communications, 2011).

### **Research question 6: What are the uses and gratifications of using video?**

This question was asked to identify how video communication applies to the Uses and Gratification Theory. It is important that there is a connection between video communication and the U & G Theory, as the connection illustrates the significance of the medium of video.

The Dictionary of Mass Media states that the Uses and Gratification Theory is the idea that audiences of mass media texts actively use them to fulfill a complex set of needs, such as gaining information for entertainment, to discuss others as a 'social facilitator', or to explore the values and ideas of others (Dictionary of Media Studies, 2006).

Research of the Uses and Gratification Theory suggests that gratifications may be channeled through at least two processes: being engaged in an aesthetically pleasing medium, known as "process gratification", and the content of the medium, known as "content gratification". Process gratification concerns the experience during the use of the medium, where content gratification means the user is aroused by the message or the information. User interactions with a medium may generate both process and content gratifications, and research suggests that both may be important (Kaunichin, Jenchung, & William, 2010).

In the study with Group 2, the top results for uses of video for students aged 18-23, 10 out of 14 respondents listed Television in their top five reasons for the use of video, nine listed YouTube, nine listed movies, four listed education, and three listed How-to videos.

## Chapter 5

### *Discussion and Recommendations*

#### **Summary**

This study was performed in response to recent progressions in the field of Communication and Public Relations. The particular emphases of this study explored how new platforms of multimedia communication, specifically video communication and video instruction can enhance the effect of a message or instruction, and the results will be applied in the development and implementation of an orientation video for the San Luis Obispo County Juvenile Hall. As technologies are continuously advancing, the research on this topic must be frequently explored and analyzed. This study set out to fill the current gaps in the research on the movement of technology in communication and how emerging generations of learners and listeners are responding. For this purpose, it was essential to collect data from an expert in the field, as well as the specific populations in which the video communication and instruction directly effects.

To take an in-depth approach to the topic, the following research questions were evaluated, individually, from the information discovered through surveys, interviews, and scholarly articles on the topic.

1. How does video communication differ from written communication, and how do they compliment each other?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of video communication or instruction?
3. How and why have learning platforms and preferences changed for a new generation of learners?
4. How does video instruction accommodate to different learning strategies?

5. How does video-based communication contribute to Public Relation efforts?
6. What are the uses and gratifications of using video?

## **Discussion**

By analyzing the data collected from Chapter 4, connections were made between survey results, expert response provided during the interview process, and the existing literature found in Chapter 2, and it is possible to draw conclusions regarding the following original research questions.

### **Research question 1: How does video communication differ from written communication, and how do they compliment each other?**

The literature addressing the fundamental differences between video communication and written communication overall highlights video's ability to convey the same original message as written communication, but through an enhanced, interesting, and attention grabbing medium. Video is attention grabbing; we are drawn to human faces, voice conveys rich information, emotions are contagious, and movement grabs attention (Rosensteel, 2013). Video can focus on a subject, bring alive emotion, illustrate techniques, and show things that need visual appreciation (Meisel, 1998).

Due to responses from both focus groups surveyed in the study and the interview conducted with Dr. Jack Phelan, it is clear that students of various ages and an expert in the field recognize the differences in how video communication has the ability to hold attention, illustrate a topic clearly, and generate enthusiasm for a subject or message. Dr. Phelan also draws attention to video's powerful ability to encompass music. "Music can set the tone, speak to emotions, or anchor certain things in your memory" (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

However, what I find most noteworthy is not what sets the two mediums apart, but how they can compliment each other and collaborate in a powerful aspect for communication purposes. Video can not only operate to compliment written communication, but also include it through the use of closed captioning and subtitles, further promoting learners reading fluency and motivation to read, and complimenting the traditional written form (Hicks, 2007).

Dr. Phelan draws that the power of using both written and video in communication is due to a new generation being the generation of multitaskers. Dr. Phelan describes that with video, students are required to multitask by watching a person, listening, and digesting what's on the screen. When they are multitasking, they are required to stay attentive to gather all the information being presented to them (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

Overall, it is possible to conclude the fundamental advancements of video communication are very different, and therefore, can offer the learner or listener with a variety of advantages to enhance the message being received. Of the greatest differences that may be most beneficial to the receiver, are the use of movement, emotion, and music. However, while younger generations continue to make the transition from traditional instruction to multimedia-enhanced instruction, it is most effective to use written communication in collaboration with video to ensure that the message is successfully delivered for all learning styles.

## **Research question 2: What are the advantages and disadvantages of video communication or instruction?**

The existing literature points to the fundamental characteristics of video as likewise being the very advantages of the medium, addressed in research question #1. However, Dr. Phelan adds that a great advantage of video is it is eternal. Unlike sitting through a lecture or presentation, video can be watched over and over so that you don't miss the concept (as with reading a page of text, but again, more engaging) (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

The general concerns for disadvantages of video in current literature pose that video communication can increase the potential for excessive cognitive load and distraction, create technical difficulties, encourage a reduction of deep thinking, and introduce a forced pace (Basu Roy & McMahon, 2012). However, from the survey conducted with Group 2, several respondents did not feel video disadvantaged students in anyway, and one commented that video is only a disadvantage to students when professors use them to teach instead of as an aid to their teaching (which was addressed through collaboration of the two mediums in research question #1).

Addressing the concern of a forced paced, Dr. Phelan stated the opposite, that video can control the pace because of the ability to replay and rewind. "It's important to get the lesson over and over until you understand it, and it's not often that a professor goes over the information that many times" (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

In comparison, it can be concluded that the advantages of video communication in a new generation of emerging technology are more prominent and of more concern than the disadvantages. Furthermore, when video and written communication are used in

collaboration, I believe it is possible to conclude that the disadvantages are of no serious concern and that the message is being conveyed with more effectiveness than ever before.

**Research question 3: How and why have learning platforms and preferences changed for a new generation of learners?**

“Younger generations’ brains are making more and more connections at once, where generations prior could not handle it. If students can handle this in TV or entertainment, we need to do that in teaching as well,” said Dr. Phelan (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

Dr. Phelan also acknowledged, “Students are raised in the environment that we try and fit them into” (personal communication, March 4, 2014). The existing literature agrees, and finds that the change in learning styles for a new generation of learners has changed due to their connection to technology that is different than all generations before them, therefore altering their preferences for mediums in which they choose to learn.

The literature states that kids are actually learning to prefer multimedia presentations and visuals to books and verbal discussion because of their exposure to TV and viewing screens (Knapp, 2000). Today’s students are no longer the people our education system was designed to teach (Hicks, 2007, p. 20). Dr. Phelan adds that the elevation of graphic material in our culture has become pervasive to our skills and actually has become part of our toolset to learning (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

When both Group 1 and Group 2 were asked to choose whether they had a greater preference for How-to videos or reading a textual document, the majority in each group responded with preference for the video format. In fact, 100% of the participants in Group 1 (ages 13-17) preferred video. In contrast, 52% of the participants in Group 2 (college

students ages 18-23) chose video as the preferred format. It can be concluded either that video is continuing to become more prominent among younger students, or that college-level students are more proficient, and therefore more preferable, in reading comprehension, listening in lecture, and traditional forms of instruction and communication.

In conclusion, it is most important to understand the emergence of a range of learning platforms, and that it is not longer just black and white. Due to diverse learning styles amongst Generation Y, there currently is a conflict with using means of traditional education, and with Generation Y's excessive exposure to technology, there is an inability created for them to learn under the standard education methods of lecture. What is crucial in identifying what is most effective for all learning styles, is supplying means in learning or instruction, such as video or multimedia, to keep the receiver stimulated.

#### **Research question 4: How does video instruction accommodate to different learning strategies?**

In an analogy Dr. Phelan used in his interview, the way in which video instruction can accommodate to different learning strategies can be compared to that of a wheelchair ramp in place of stairs. Video is the wheelchair ramp, and the traditional, written format is the stairs; we build the ramp so that you can access the same thing you would be able to via stairs. "With learning, we need to build ramps for people to get in who can't just listen and take notes," Phelan said. "We need supplements, one of which can be video" (personal communication, March 4, 2014). The existing literature supports the use of alternative formats. When instructional devices that combine learning styles are utilized, a greater number of students may be reach and effectively taught (Hicks, 2007, p. 19).



In the survey with Group 2 asking “What Kind of Learner Are You” responses were decently spread out amongst seven different options. The top three most popular responses all included a visual aspect to the learning style:

1. Visual and hands on
2. Visual
3. Visual and auditory

In comparison with Group 1, which was provided with the options of video, auditory, neither, or both, auditory scored the lowest with only 4% of the respondents. Visual, however, took 57% of respondents, neither at 17% and both with 22%.

From both groups of survey respondents, as well as from the interview with Dr. Phelan and the existing literature, it is possible to conclude that video accommodates to different learning strategies, because on the evolving range of learning types, the majority include a need for a visual representation. Addressing this need with the use of video will accommodate to a larger variety of receivers and allow for the message to be more effective.

#### **Research question 5: How does video-based communication contribute to Public Relations efforts?**

It is critical for Public Relations professionals to always be aware of the most effective medium to deliver a message. Video-based communication gives Public Relations professionals the leverage to communicate with all platforms of receivers addressed in research question #4.

Existing literature reports that more business leaders, such as Matter Communications Public Relations agency, are embracing video as part of their public

relations campaigns, and the multimedia messages are resonating, resulting in increased consumer engagement and greater brand and product awareness. The Director of Marketing at Sigma Corporation of America, Christine Moosman, said, “There is no question that video changes the communication game. It enables us to connect and engage with an audience we might ordinarily miss, and further speak to the audience we’ve been talking to all along.” (Matter Communications, 2011).

Overall, it is possible to conclude that Public Relations agencies and business leaders are using video for the same reasons as teachers, experts, and communicators addressed in the previous research questions: to further engage with audiences that may ordinarily, under traditional means of communication and instruction, be missed or overlooked.

#### **Research question 6: What are the uses and gratifications of using video?**

The Uses and Gratification Theory is the idea that audiences of mass media texts actively use them to fulfill a complex set of needs, such as gaining information, for entertainment, to discuss others as a ‘social facilitator’, or to explore the values and ideas of others (Dictionary of Media Studies, 2006).

The top five reported uses of video, from a study with Group 2 of 14 respondents, were TV, YouTube, Education, and How-to videos. While further investigation will need to be research to concluded the top uses of video for all peoples aged 18-23, we can draw from this study that college-level students are using video for a wide range of purposes, both education and entertainment. As Dr. Phelan previously was quote, the excessive use of video and technology is changing the way receivers are *choosing* to learn (personal communication, March 4, 2014), and therefore manipulating their gratifications.

Again, if younger generations are making more connections at once, and can handle this in TV and entertainment (personal communication, March 4, 2014), we need to do that in our communication strategies to ensure that receivers are still gaining gratification for their uses of both video and platforms of instruction.

### **Recommendation for Practice**

After completion of this study, substantial data has been collected and analyzed on the topic of video communication and instruction. Given the information collected, it is important to highlight the most insightful content and present it for future Public Relations and Communications professionals, particularly when communicating with Generation Y and further generations. Practitioners may benefit from this study in the following ways: capitalizing on the fundamental advantages of video communication, using written and video communication in collaboration, knowing the audience in order to provide adequate resources to meet their learning styles, and embracing the advancements of video and technology for communication and instruction.

#### **Capitalize on the Advantages of Video Communication**

Video communication fosters fundamental advantage to traditional, written communication that can transform a message to be more powerful, meaningful, and memorable. As Weinschenk and Meisel both found, video is attention grabbing as we are drawn to movement, voice, and human faces (Rosensteel, 2013), and video can focus on a subject, bring alive emotion, illustrate techniques, and show things that need visual appreciation (Meisel, 1998).

One of the most meaningful research points provoked through the interview with Dr. Jack Phelan was the power of music in communication, and how the medium of video

can encompass that power. As Phelan stressed, “Music can set the tone, speak to emotions, or anchor certain things in your memory” (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

### **Combine Text and Video in Collaboration**

From the data collected in this study, I would recommend that video is used in practice in collaboration with text and written communication. When used in collaboration, video and written communication can effectively communicate with more audiences, and as Dr. Phelan cited, using both forms simultaneously better stimulates younger generations, the generation of multitaskers (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

While they can be used in combination (subtitles or closed-captioning) or to compliment one another (providing both forms), I recommend, from the research collect in this study, that video be used as the dominant medium, with text as a supplement. The survey results collected suggest that students, in general, ages 13-23, prefer video for instruction (i.e. a How-to video) to the written format, however, it is also apparent that written text is still favored and comprehended in various learning styles.

As younger generations continue to make the transition from traditional instruction to multimedia-enhanced instruction, it is most effective to use written communication in collaboration with video to ensure that the message is successfully delivered for all learning styles.

### **Know the Audience and Provide Adequate Resources**

From the completion of this study, the most significant element found in effective communication, whether using mediums in a written form, video, or other forms of multimedia, is knowing and understanding the learning styles and needs of the audience. Stressing that everyone operates in the world we live in differently, Dr. Phelan clarified this

concept saying, “With learning, we need to build ramps for people to get in who can’t just listen and take notes, the same way we do with wheelchair ramps as opposed to stairs” (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

The results of this study showed that learning styles are no longer just reading or listening, in fact, there are a wide range of learning styles and platforms that must be considered in communication and instruction, and for Generation Y learners, many of the learning styles benefit from the use of technology and visuals. In the results found in this study, 96% of respondents ages 18-23, and 79% of respondents ages 13-17 classified themselves in one of the visual learning categories.

In the article on cognitive retention by Hicks, she said. “As a result of increased technology that has become prolific within society, Generation Y may require more up to date learning techniques in the classroom in order to hold their interest thereby attempting to increase the students’ cognitive retentions” (Hicks, 2007, p. 14). As Dr. Phelan stressed, younger generations brains are making more and more connections at once, when generations before could not handle it (personal communication, March 4, 2014).

The Uses and Gratification Theory says that gratifications can be channeled through two processes: being engaged in an aesthetically pleasing medium, and the actual message or content of the medium (Dictionary of Media Studies, 2006). Generation Y audiences are discarding the latter because of lack of interest in the former.

From the research gathered in this study, it can be suggested that the communicator can control the effectiveness of a message by knowing the learning styles of the audience, providing adequate resources, and stimulating the capabilities and interest of the individual receiver.

## **Embrace the Advancements of Technology in Communication**

From this study the following can be established: embrace advancements to address the need. There is a current need in education and communication to deviate from traditional forms, and much of that can be attributed to the increase in technology consumption with Generation Y. Generation Y learners have been exposed to a variety of technology, and therefore have related behaviors toward learning (Hicks, 2007, p. 14).

Organizations that have embraced the advancements of technology are seeing positive response. Public Schools nationwide are using video to deliver their message effectively, with a goal to bring in students, show parents why building a new school is needed, or to recruit teachers. The Associate Director for National School Public Relations Association said, "What we're seeing now and why it's more prevalent is that the technologies have converged in the past few years to make it very easy and affordable for districts to use video in many different ways to reach constituencies" (Pascopella, 2005).

To embrace the advancements of technology and culture in communication, through the medium of video, is to continue to move forward in Public Relations and Communication practices and in delivering messages that effectively register with the audience.

## **Study Conclusion**

In conclusion, given the general findings of the study, uses of video communication may benefit from both qualitative and quantitative research performed regularly on the topic of video communication and instruction. Routine data collection and interviews should be collected to continually reassess up to date preferences and effectiveness of communication platforms.

This study will be implemented for the original purpose of remodeling the orientation process for more effective communication at the San Luis Obispo County Juvenile Hall, and serves as an educational tool for Communication and Public Relations professionals, as well as instructors and educators, who are interested in implementing the advantages of video communication to better correspond with the new learning styles of younger generations.

This study is intended to contribute to a progression in Public Relations and communication to stay current in professional practices. Further research is necessary in order to continue to remain current in the continuous change in the uses and gratifications of video communication and the mediums of effective communication strategies.

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## Appendix A

### *Interview Transcript: Dr. Jack Phelan*

The following interview was conducted to gain expert perspective and practice insight from a college-level educator/instructor. The questions are focused on use of video in the classroom, opinion of effectiveness, and opinion of student response in the classroom.

Interview: Rachael Burnham

Respondent: Cal Poly Professor and expert in video production and communication  
(Dr. Jack Phelan)

Date of Interview 3/4/2014

#### *Interview Transcription:*

Rachael Burnham: "To begin, the first question I have for you is: How does video communication differ from written communication, and how do they compliment each other?"

Jack Phelan: "Well first of all, video by its very nature is a multimedia platform – moving tables, moving texts, audio, music, etc. The lone aspect that video incorporates musical intelligence is very powerful. Music can set the tone, speak to emotions, or anchor things in your memory. In terms of complimenting each other, it's very interesting. Because of the new law that closed captioning is required, there's a strange thing that happens. You're watching the video, but also getting the text with it, fitting into the new generation of the multitaskers, and completely super-charging your brain."

RB: "What do you see as the advantages of video communication or instruction that take it to the next level above written communication?"

JP: "Using video is eternal – it can be watched over and over so that you don't miss the concept. Of course you want the experience of the classroom, but education is just exploding online. It's important to get the lesson over and over until you understand it, and it's not often that a professor goes over the information that many times. With video, you can stop it or start it over again. If you have short, compelling videos of the lesson, it's the replay factor that's really powerful. Plus, we've proven that you speak 150 words per minute, and we read 250 words per minute... on average. So, if an instructor is putting text up on the screen, students are likely to be reading it faster than an instructor can say it. They then get ahead and bored. That's where they lose focus."

RB: "Working with students everyday, I'm sure you've noticed a bit of change of preference for certain mediums in the classroom. How and why have learning platforms and preferences changed for a new generation of learners?"

JP: "I did a study on learning types myself before when working toward my masters, and worked a lot with what is called Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and what we're

finding is that everyone learns differently... EVERYONE. Universal Design for Learning tries to encompass everyone's design for learning. UDL and multiple intelligences says we learn nine different ways... you can check that out yourself because it's very interesting that it's no longer just this way or that way. Today we are so consumed in media and using it for constant communication. We have now quickly elevated out of the industrial age, which was very much verbal and mathematical, to the information age, and now to the communication age. Media saturates our lives. We wonder why students are different in this new generation of learning styles, but you know, students are raised in the environment that we try and fit them into. New learners are raised in front of the television, especially lower economical learners. The elevation of graphic material is pervasive in all of our culture, and that becomes your learning toolset – it engages you more as you are easier able to connect to other things. Kids are constantly consuming so much, as I mentioned before, always multitasking. It's proven that the younger generations' brains are making more connections at once, where generation's prior could not handle it. If students can handle this in TV or entertainment, we need to do that in teaching as well, so that it stay stimulating for them and they can super-charge their brains and stay focused.

RB: "You touched a little on how video is advantageous to a variety of learning types, but how exactly does video instruction accommodate the range of different learning strategies?"

JP: "It's the same idea of Universal Design, that everyone operates in the world we live in differently, and video is one way to reach those that cannot connect to the message through other forms. Here's the simplest way to put it: It's the same as a wheelchair against the stairs; you build a ramp so they can get in. With learning, we need to build ramps for people to get in who can't just listen and take notes. We need supplements, one of which can be video. When those students can't get it, what happens to them in a traditional classroom? Many of them fall off the radar because they are spatial, visual learners. They are not going to grasp concept from listening. For disabled learners, technology, or the "screen", gives them a multisensory use for learning. The blind can't see the words, but a video or technological platform can speak as a reader would, and they can access the information. The deaf can't hear the words, but they can read it on the screen and see visuals or moving graphics. It's really, at the very least, just another option for those that need it... and it's better to have options than to unwillingly force students all in one direction. It provides another form of representation, making sure all mediums are available to the people that need them and providing alternative methods for all learners."

RB: "How often do you use video for education purposes in your own classes, and for what purpose? What is the outcome you're hoping to get from using it?"

JP: "I do use it a lot, but really, I doesn't even phase me much anymore because I find it necessary at times. What I'm doing more and more of is supplemental, call "scaffolding". I teach something and then provide something extra. If you didn't get it all in class, or if a PowerPoint is not enough, then I do a walk-through demonstration video. I film my cursor on the screen as a visual video lesson of what we did in class for the students to use at home. It's really wild that I can do that and I think students really like it! In some of my

classes, students are now embedding video into their PDF's that they turn into me electronically. It's no longer black text on white paper where you most likely don't want to continue reading. Instead readers are pulled in by moving pictures and *interesting, powerful* information."

RB: "Is that difficult for you to creating the "scaffolding" videos?"

JP: "No, not at all. It's actually very easy and I can't just upload it really quickly for them to use, it's never too long of a video anyway, generally just around a few minutes."

RB: "Do you think students grasping concepts better or performing better when video is used as either the instruction or the aid? And have you noticed this in your own classes at all?"

JP: "I guess it kinda all depends on the instructor, but I definitely note a switch in my students when something is in front of them on a screen. I see it as the "CNN Headline News" effect – they are forced to multitask, keeping them more stimulated. Suddenly, they are required to multitask by watching a person, listening, and digesting what is written on the screen. But it's not just in class; it's also at home that they're required to have this same attention to the medium. Overall, I think the students, like I said before, really like the walk-through videos... many because they need to revisit the ideas. Also, whether they're actually interested in the content I'm having them watch or teaching them, I would think it's just because of the medium that they've grown up in that they like it so much."

RB: "Some of the research I've come across has some arguments saying that video communication encourages a decrease in critical thinking. Do you agree with this, and do you feel video has any disadvantages for students?"

JP: "Well, there is the idea still that video is a passive medium, meaning it's coming *to* you and you are *receiving* the information. Reading, however, or engaging with an instructor, is more interactive or 'organic'. It requires feedback. Video can be a one-way channel... but much research will say that that's okay, you're still taking in the content. So I guess from there to really know if it's being advantageous or having an opposite effect is just how you apply it and are tested on the information. You know? The next important step, when we can *really* decide if we're *actually* learning, is if you can then teach or explain the information to someone else, then application. If a student is still required to apply the information, we can really evaluate the effectiveness of the message... or the medium. But as far as completely disadvantaging students or wasting their time (or mine), no. It's not just playing a video; it's usually a snippet or illustration or something small that's supportive of my lecture. We are not a third grade class that just sits there and watches a movie for an hour and a half. I'll use anything up to five minutes long at the very most. Duration and purpose are both very important."

RB: "OK, so I conducted to different surveys with two very different demographics, one with some of the youth at the San Luis Obispo Juvenile Hall, ages 13-17, and one with college-level students, the majority attending Cal Poly, ages 18-23. What I found when

asking which medium they preferred, video or text, 100% of the respondents between the ages of 13 and 17 chose video, where only 52% of the respondents between the ages of 18 and 23 chose video. Why do you think that is?

JP: "I would say it's because of the very skills that got you and every other college-level student to where you are. Verbal, linguistic, mathematical. That is how you are tested to get into Cal Poly. Those are the primary focuses of the SAT scores and college entrance tests. Cal Poly has weeded out anyone that doesn't fit that model... and we might actually be seeing it as a problem. They're great at reading and memorization, but the critical thinking skills (creativity), is not a focus. As a group, we are very hard to compare to other populations. Cal Poly (and many other universities) is not a representation of the country. These students are the strongest verbal, linguistic, and mathematical people around. So at their level, they're likely to choose the written platforms, the reading and memorizing or taking notes, where students not at Cal Poly, or below the university level, would be likely to choose the video platform for instruction. Cal Poly students have the skill, strength, and ability to choose to read the information and digest it, which is likely to be why they would then prefer it."

RB: "OK, now just to wrap things up and focus on where to go from here, how do you see video progressing in the classroom?"

JP: "As I mentioned briefly before, education online is exploding, and people are getting more comfortable with learning electronically. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) will continue to gain popularity, being visually and spatially driven; makes the illustrations move, illustrates the message, and illustrates the evidence, which all enhance learning. Also, flipped classrooms – where the lecture is taught at home, and the 'homework' or discussion then happens in class the next day- it's revolutionizing the way we teach and learn."

RB: "Can you explain a little further on the 'flipped classrooms'?"

JP: "The movement towards flipped classrooms is what will happen, and this is where video is going to become a major lesson. Teachers will likely videotape lessons from *master* professors, flipping the "homework". The classroom component is the actual homework, and then the homework component that you would previously do at home by yourself; you do in the classroom with your classmates and professor. Personally, I'm sold on flipping classrooms. The video becomes the classroom, then allowing students to come to the classroom to talk about what they've learned from the video. I think it's great, and I think we're going to be seeing a lot more of it here in the next few years."

RB: "OK, great. Thank you very much."